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ABSTRACT

This resource guide for adult education personnel describes programs and publications on APL (Adult Performance Level) and Competency-Based Adult Education (CBAE). Includes: (1) Descriptions of APL examination programs developed by the American College Testing Program, (2) brief description of Missouri project on the identification of adult basic education teacher competencies, (3) annotations of six miscellaneous resources (slide/tape program, resource books, catalogs, adult competency instruction guide, etc.), (4) short description of San Francisco State University staff development project, (5) a brief description of state directors' conference in Dallas, Texas, and (6) notes on APL activities at various conferences. Addresses for obtaining resources and more complete reports are included. (WL)

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COMPETENCY-BASED ADULT EDUCATION REPORT

Division of Adult Education
U.S. Office of Education
Department of Health, Education,
and Welfare

July 1976

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ABOUT THE REPORT

Well before the national announcement of the Adult Performance Level findings, adult education projects in various locations were developing programs, training teachers, etc., in relation to preliminary APL findings and research products. Now that APL has raised the level of public awareness regarding the inability of adults to perform at adequate functional levels, there is an even greater need for communication among adult educators and their organizations. The Division of Adult Education will, from time to time, gather information relating to APL and competency-based adult education (CBAE) and report this information to the field. Included on our mailing list are HEW regional office personnel, university adult education programs, adult education associations and councils, administrators of adult education (State and local), and local program staff.

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ACT ANNOUNCES APL EXAMINATION PROGRAM

A newly developed national examination program that represents a new concept in adult basic education has been announced by the American College Testing Program (ACT). The Adult Performance Level (APL) Examination Program is being introduced by ACT on a nationwide basis and will be available for use in a variety of educational settings this spring.

The American College Testing Program, a not-for-profit public trust, is organized to provide information that students, educators, and administrators need to make rational and productive plans and decisions. ACT offers a wide variety of large-scale services for major users, including federal and State governments, as well as specially tailored services for a single school, small system, or professional association.

An agreement reached earlier this year with the U.S. Office of Education and the University of Texas made it possible for ACT to achieve final development and make exclusive nationwide distribution of the new APL Examination Program. Resulting directly from the Adult Performance Level study, the APL Examination Program is designed for diagnosis and evaluation of those competencies necessary for adult living.

The initial form of the APL examination, available in both an Adult Edition and a High School Edition, provides a general overall assessment of an individual's ability to perform important basic adult functions. ACT has indicated that a major use of the new program will be in the assessment of educational needs at the classroom level. A subsequent

second stage of the program's development will make a series of five more specialized subtests available to provide a more precise assessment within each of the five APL knowledge areas.

Being both versatile and specialized, use of the new examination is not limited to adults or to continuing education programs. In fact, initial interest for extensive use of the APL Examination Program has come from individual high schools, school districts, and State departments of education. An experimental version of the APL examination has been administered to a national sample of 5,000 adults in adult basic education courses and also to a national sample of 5,000 high school juniors and seniors. The APL examination will be available for purchase in late July. For further information contact:

Tom Mann
American College Testing Program
P. O. Box 168
Iowa City, Iowa 52240

RESEARCH COMPLETED ON APL COMPETENCIES

The Center for Resource Development in Adult Education (CRDAE) at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, in cooperation with the University of Texas APL Project, has completed a project for the identification of competencies that are critical to ABE teachers using APL instructional approaches. Purposes of the research were to identify and rank those competencies that APL teachers think are important and to determine if ABE teacher competencies from APL teachers.

For example, initial findings indicate that, in a broad sense, APL teachers seem to attach greater importance to community resources and orientation and to problem-solving. They show strong concern for functional curricula and are more concerned for an active role for the adult student in the planning/le ing process. Also, both APL and ABE teachers hold effective comm ication with students as the top priority.

As a result of this study, APL deficiencies can be established and used to assist in planning and conducting teacher training programs at various levels. A report of the research results is now available. Copies are being distributed to State and regional offices and selected universities. A limited number of copies will be made available to other interested persons. For further information contact:

Dr. Don Mocker
Center for Resource Development
in Adult Education
School of Education
University of Missouri
Kansas City, Missouri 64110

APL-RELATED RESOURCES

•The University of Texas has developed a fifteen minute Slide/Tape Program telling the story of the Adult Performance Level (APL) survey and presenting information on local and State implementations of the APL research and products. The program consists of 140 slides, a cassette tape with both audible and inaudible "bleeps" and a script booklet. Program cost is $50.00. Contact Ms. Hickock, Division of Extension, University of Texas, 103 Extension Building, Au tin, Texas 78712.

•The University of Texas has also completed its revision of the ABC's in APL resource book. This is an annotated bibliography which updates the one published in December, 1974. Approximately 230 pages in length, this edition is enclosed in a loose-leaf binder to facilitate further updating. The publication cost is $5.00 per copy. Contact Ms. Hickock, Division of Extension, University of Texas, 103 Extension Building, Austin, Texas 78712.

•The APL Final Report, a comprehensive record of the University of Texas project, will be available this summer. Publication cost is $5.00. Contact: Division of Extension, University of Texas, 103 Extension Building, Austin, Texas 78712.

•The Division of Adult Education has published an APL-Related Educational Products Booklet describing products developed by special projects funded under Section 309 which may prove especially useful to programs that are being developed around APL objectives. The projects identified have developed

materials that are readily available, that may be utilized or adapted without requiring special training, and that are free or of minimal cost to adult education programs. For information contact, Field Operations and Services Branch, Division of Adult Education, U.S. Office of Education, 7th and D Streets, S.W., Room 5076, Washington, D.C. 20202.

- The Research and Innovation Catalog describing current APL-related projects funded through State adult education programs is now available. Twenty State and local implementations are abstracted in this first edition. The catalog is to be updated as information on new projects is received. Information may be received from the Division of Adult Education, Field Operations and Services Branch, U.S. Office of Education, 7th and D Streets, S.W., Room 5076, Washington, D.C. 20202.

- The Auburn University APL instructional books have recently been revised and consolidated into a two-volume Adult Competency Instructional Guide. One volume covers the Consumer Economics and Health Knowledge areas, while the other covers the Occupational Knowledge, Community Resources, and Government and Law areas. The set is available for $12.00 (or $6.00 for each volume). Copies are available from Dr. Harry Frank, Vocational and Adult Education Department, Auburn University, 203 Petrie Hall, Auburn, Alabama 36830.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: THE SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Begun in May of 1974, the major objective in the first phase of the program was the training of four teams of ABE teachers in the development of instructional modules and materials for competency-based ABE in consumer education, health, occupational knowledge, and government and law. The teachers were helped to determine the needs of specific student populations in Northern California, including large urban multi-ethnic, large urban Black, small urban Chicano, and suburban White.

In the present year, the major program objectives are: 1) to train the participants in field testing the modules with specific populations at their own schools and to involve at least two new schools in field testing the modules with populations comparable to those at the existing sites; 2) to evaluate the outcomes of the field testing and revise the modules; 3) to prepare the modules for reproduction and dissemination, and 4) to plan for a variety of dissemination strategies.

In addition, during both years, the project has included in its objectives the career development of the teacher participants and selected graduate students from San Francisco State University who are candidates for the M.A. in Education.

A major emphasis of this project is the creation of a process for the development of ABE teachers. In each of the two years a cycle of four two-day workshops has been held at two-month intervals. Such spacing has allowed the participants to return to their schools after each training workshop and develop that part of the plan for which the workshop prepared them. Following each workshop, a staff member has visited each site to consult with the teacher-administrator teams to help them with their model and program development.

The major outcome of this project is expected to be the validation of a systematic staff development process for ABE teachers. Other major outcomes will include: 1) the specific modules and materials for competency-based adult basic education which focus on the teaching of basic skills by using consumer education, health, occupational knowledge, and government and law as content areas. Each module will describe the specific student population for which it is designed, competency-based objectives, appropriate instructional strategies and resources, suggested organizational patterns, pre- and post-assessment instruments, and evaluation techniques; 2) the presentation of specific segments of the instructional modules through the use of sound-slide sequences; 3) specific planning with ABE administrators for implementing programs of inservice training for ABE teachers; 4) the career development of teacher participants and selected graduate students from San Francisco State University; 5) the demonstration of new modes of cooperative effort between publicly-supported ABE programs, the Region IX ABE Staff Development Project of the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, San Francisco State University, and ABE administrators and teachers in California, Nevada, Arizona, and Hawaii.

Current planning calls for the continued development and validation of the staff development process and the national dissemination of project findings. For further information contact:

Dr. John Tibbetts (or Dr. Dorothy Westby-Gibson)
School of Education
San Francisco State University
1600 Holloway Avenue
San Francisco, California 94132

STATE DIRECTORS CONFERENCE REPORT

The national conference of State Directors, Regional Program Officers, Division of Adult Education (USOE) personnel, and other State, local, and university adult education leadership met February 25 and 26 at the Royal Coach Inn, Dallas, Texas. The conference was jointly sponsored by the U.S. Office of Education and the University of Texas APL Project, and consisted of two major program components. The February 25 conference day included a series of four concurrent sessions presenting ten APL implementation programs. Exhibited and discussed were:

1) "Just Around the Corner" - an APL-based curriculum approach utilizing educational television (Mississippi);

2) "Instructional Modules for Adults" - utilizing APL objectives (Alabama);

3) "Newspapers as Instructional Tools in Competency-Based Adult Education" (South Carolina);

4) "Learning Activity Packages for Adults" - APL-based curriculum units (Providence, Rhode Island);

5) "ESL and APL" - curriculum program (Lancaster, Pennsylvania);

6) "APL-Related Curricula" - two different approaches (Far West Education Laboratory - see Program Highlight article);

7) "Developing State Support Systems for Competency-Based Education" - two State approaches (Utah, Oregon);

8) "Teacher Competencies and APL/CBAE" - identifying teacher competencies critical to APL (University of Missouri - see CRDAE article);

9) "Integrating Competency-Based Curriculum and High School Certification Systems" - (New York, Texas); and

10) "Life Skills for Adults" - competency-based curriculum/counseling system (Columbia University).

The second conference day was devoted to a presentation and interest survey by American College Testing Program (see ACT article) and the development and presentation of conference recommendations by seven critical area work groups. Content areas included adult education staff development, curriculum, dissemination and utilization, State coordination and support, competency based diploma programs, and national support.

The recommendations have been edited and distributed to all State Directors and conference participants.

APL FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS ADDRESSED AT NATIONAL CONFERENCES

The Adult Performance Level Study and what it means for society and the education community are topics being discussed at local, State, and national meetings throughout the country. Most recently, the Adult Basic Education Commission Conference in Kansas City emphasized APL coordination and implementation in their program. Also, in Washington, D.C., Washington Education Press Association members were given presentations on the APL study and its implications by two staff persons in the Division of Adult Education.

There are two major national conferences this summer that will be featuring the APL study. The American Association of School Administrators is sponsoring a seminar in Colorado Springs, Colorado (August 2-6, 1976) on Designing and Conducting Basic Skills Programs. Mr. Richard Hobson, Chief of the Field Operations and Services Branch, Division of Adult Education, will speak on the APL research and its implications for the public schools. Also on the agenda is a presentation on Oregon's competency-based education program. The Educational Leadership Conference at Chautauqua, New York (August 8-14), will feature presentations and discussions on Lifelong Learning, and APL headed by Mr. Paul Delker and Mr. James Parker of the Division of Adult Education.

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